News Release

EQUAL PAY DAY 2023: DEPARTMENT OF LABOR INITIATIVES SEEK TO CLOSE GENDER, RACIAL WAGE GAP, INCREASE EQUITY IN FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Actions support unprecedented investments by Biden-Harris administration

WASHINGTON – For women working in the U.S., the date of Equal Pay Day isn't a day of celebration. Rather, the day is a reminder that it takes women 15 months to earn the same amount as men earned in 12 months.

Today is Equal Pay Day in 2023, a reminder of systemic inequality faced by women and especially those of color. In the U.S., women who work full-time, year-round, are paid an average of 83.7 percent as much as men, which amounts to a difference of $10,000 per year. The gaps are even larger for many women of color and women with disabilities.

"Equal Pay Day – the day of the year when women working in the U.S. finally earn the same amount as men did in the year before – is an unfortunate reminder that historic wage inequity continues," said Acting Secretary of Labor Julie Su. "The Biden-Harris administration has made unprecedented investments through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the CHIPS and Science Act and the Inflation Reduction Act and remains determined to remove barriers that prevent women from obtaining good-paying jobs found in the projects these investments will fund to help close the gender wage gap."

The U.S. Department of Labor has several agency initiatives underway to combat gender and racial pay disparities in the workforce and ensure equity in the implementation of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Chips and Science and Inflation Reduction acts. They include the following:

- The launch of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs' Mega Construction Project Program to foster equal opportunity in the construction trades workforce by removing hiring barriers and promoting diversity as qualified workers are considered for construction jobs. Read an OFCCP fact sheet to help employers take proactive approaches to pay equity.
- The Employment and Training Administration's March 6, 2023, announcement of a cooperative agreement of nearly $20 million to support TradesFutures, the National Urban League and their community partners in developing a strategy to substantially increase the number of participants from underrepresented populations – including women and underserved communities – in Registered Apprenticeships in the construction industry. The effort will enroll more than 13,000 participants in apprenticeship readiness programs and place at least 7,000 participants in construction industry Registered Apprenticeships.
- Publication by the Women's Bureau of a brief on the causes of the gender wage gap, including new statistics and analyses of gender and racial wage gaps, and a second brief on salary history bans legislation that prohibit employers from asking about prior salaries as a way to promote equal pay includes historic information on equal pay legislation and policymaking, salary history bans' benefits and design and other policies for closing the gender wage gap.
- The ongoing Good Jobs Initiative provides tools with practical strategies to increase equal employment opportunities on infrastructure projects, including using Project Labor Agreements as Tools for Equity and establishing Access and Opportunity Committees, stakeholder groups that meet regularly to monitor and support diversity and equity goals on a specific project.

"To build an inclusive economy, we need to enable workers to obtain jobs based on their interests, skills and aptitude rather than gender, race or ethnicity, and promote good-paying jobs that follow fair wage setting practices, like those found in union employment, to help to eliminate the wage gap," Acting Secretary Su added.

Learn more about Equal Pay and Pay Transparency Protections.

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